

How much do you know about paper money?

By Roger Boye

Here's a short quiz on the world's most famous paper money, United States "greenbacks." As usual, answers are at the end, but no fair peeking.

1. True or false: Dollar bills without "In God We Trust" on the back side are rare misprints worth \$1,000 each.

2. The Latin words *annuit coeptis* and *novus ordo seclorum* appear on all modern-day \$1 bills. What do they mean?

3. True or false: Years ago, the likeness of Martha Washington [George's wife] adorned \$1 bills.

4. Treasury executives issued their first currency under the Constitution during the Civil War. What did U.S. citizens use for money before then?

5. What was the largest denomination bill ever printed by Uncle Sam? Also, whose portrait was on it?

6. How tall is a stack of 1,000 \$1 bills?

7. True or false: Most counterfeiters fail to duplicate the paper used in genuine U.S. currency.

8. A "rag picker" [a] inspects freshly printed bills for errors, [b] collects rare paper money, [c] destroys worn bills or [d] collects old clothes.

9. Before 1928, dollar bills were longer and wider than currency now. What was their nickname?

10. Why is all modern-day U.S. currency the same color?

Answers:

1. False. The motto was added to \$1 bills in 1957. Bills printed before then would be rare if they carried the motto!

2. "He [God] has favored our undertakings" and "A new order of the ages."

3. True. She appeared on \$1 silver certificates issued in the late 1800s.

4. Coins made by the U.S. and foreign governments; also, bills issued by private banks and local governments.

5. A \$100,000 gold certificate of series 1934 depicting president Woodrow Wilson. The bills were used by Federal Reserve banks, not in general circulation.

6. About 4½ inches. Laid end to end, 1,000 bills would stretch nearly a city block.

7. True. The paper contains tiny red and blue fibers, which often are missing in counterfeits.

8. B. Government currency became known as "rag money" during the Civil War, and the name has stuck.

9. Horse blankets.

10. The uniform color forces people to look at the design to determine the denomination, making quick counterfeit detection more likely. At least, that's the theory.